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ABSTRACT

This guide presents nine tasks to be performed in planning organizational career development programs. Following an introduction that briefly discusses the guidebook's purposes, the state of career development programs in the work place, and uses of the guide, the nine tasks are discussed in two main sections. Part 1, Leadership Tasks, covers three initial objectives: determining organizational readiness and commitment and presenting a program proposal effectively; building a team to assist in planning and work once organizational approval has been granted; and staffing the program with qualified personnel in carefully defined positions. Part 2 focuses on six program development tasks: assessing internal and external resources; assessing the career development needs of both the organization and the employees; defining program goals based on the needs assessment; designing the program from successful models and derived strategies; implementing the program by way of listing resources, personnel, and deadlines for each program goal; and evaluating the program and using the assessment data. Each task section includes a brief list of suggested readings and, where appropriate, example worksheets helpful for completing the task. The guide concludes with a list of general resources (monographs, periodicals, and organizations) on career development and references used in this publication's development. (DTT)

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORK PLACE: A GUIDE FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPERS

INFORMATION SERIES NO. 247

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FOREWORD

The Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/ACVE) is one of sixteen clearinghouses in a nationwide information system that is funded by the National Institute of Education. One of the functions of the Clearinghouse is to interpret the literature that is entered into the ERIC database. This paper should be of particular interest to human resource development practitioners in business and industry and other areas, as well as to career development specialists.

The profession is indebted to Susan Imel of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education for her scholarship in the preparation of this paper. She was assisted by Richard L. Knowdell, Career Research and Testing, and Anita Sklare Lancaster, Board of Higher Education, State of Connecticut.

Dr. Imel is a Research Specialist at the National Center, where she serves as Assistant Director and Adult Education Specialist for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. Prior to joining the National Center, she developed continuing education programs in a number of areas, including social work, gerontology, nursing, and the arts.

Mr. Knowdell serves as President of Career Research and Testing, San Jose, California, and consults with Fortune 500 companies on the design and development of inhouse career planning programs. From 1975 to 1980, he served as the manager of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Employee Assistance Program and established their nationally known Career Development Program. He is founder of the Career Planning and Adult Development Network and chairs the National Vocational Guidance Association's Commission on Career Guidance in Business and Industry.

Dr. Lancaster has been sent from the state of Connecticut in order to work for the U.S. Department of Defense, directing several projects; most notably, one project will result in a crosswalk of military-civilian occupational information and the integration of such information into career information delivery systems. Prior to her move to Connecticut, Dr. Lancaster was a counselor educator at Saint Louis University.

Recognition is also due to Keith Moseley, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and to Delia Newman and Louise Vetter, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, for their critical review of the manuscript prior to its final revision and publication. Susan Imel, Assistant Director at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, coordinated the publication's development. She was assisted by Juliet V. Miller, Bart Beaudin, and Sandra Kerka. The manuscript was typed by Carmen Smith and Catherine Smith, and Marilyn Deal and Janet Ray served as word processor operators. Editing was performed by Connie Faddis of the National Center's Editorial Services.

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in Vocational Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This guide presents nine tasks to be performed in planning organizational career development programs. Following an introduction that briefly discusses the guidebook's purposes, the state of career development programs in the work place, and uses of the guide, the nine tasks are discussed in two main sections. Part 1, Leadership Tasks, covers three initial objectives: determining organizational readiness and commitment and presenting a program proposal effectively; building a team to assist in planning and work once organizational approval has been granted; and staffing the program with qualified personnel in carefully defined positions. Part 2 focuses on six program development tasks: assessing internal and external resources; assessing the career development needs of both the organization and the employees; defining program goals based on the needs assessment; designing the program from successful models and derived strategies; implementing the program by way of listing resources, personnel, and deadlines for each program goal; and evaluating the program and using the assessment data. Each task section includes a brief list of suggested readings and, where appropriate, example worksheets helpful for completing the task. The guide concludes with a list of general resources (monographs, periodicals, and organizations) on career development and references used in this publication's development.

Literature relating to the topic of organizational career development can be found in ERIC under the following descriptors: Guides; *Career Development; *Program Development; *Program Implementation; Program Evaluation; Needs Assessment; Employer Attitudes; Individual Needs; *Leadership Responsibility; *Program Administration; Employer Employee Relationship; Industry; Resources; Career Planning; Organizational Development; *Planning. Asterisks indicate descriptors having particular relevance.

INTRODUCTION

Purposes of the Guide

There has been growing interest in the career development of individuals within their work settings. Although some of this interest is societal-based, it also can be attributed to factors within companies and organizations, such as declining productivity, affirmative action and equal opportunity legislation, and high employee turnover rates. Many organizations are involved in some form of career development activity, but there is evidence that programs have not been developed in a systematic manner (Lancaster and Berne 1981; Leibowitz and Schlossberg 1981). Many existing programs lack a rationale and have been developed without regard to an overall plan. Consequently, career development exists on the periphery of many organizations, rather than in the mainstream.

This guide provides a framework for planning career development activities in a systematic manner. By outlining the essential steps that need to be carried out in developing programs, it will help you to address organizational issues and concerns regarding career development as well as to plan systematic programs. The guide has been developed to serve as a companion volume to *Employer-sponsored Career Development Programs*, by Anita S. Lancaster and Richard R. Berne (1981), a review and synthesis of organizational career development activities. You will be referred to that paper at different points in the guide, as it provides important theoretical information about adult career development and the evolution of employer-sponsored career development programs. Lancaster and Berne also make recommendations for the future and present case studies of career development programs in a variety of organizational settings. You also will be directed to other types of sources on career development and on program planning throughout the guide.

Overview of Career Development Programs in the Work Place

Before initiating career development activities in your organization, it is important that you understand what is meant by the terms "career" and "career development." On the basis of Super's (1957; 1976) work, Lancaster and Berne (1981) define *career* as "a sequence of positions occupied over a lifetime; career embraces and interfaces with all other life roles as a total expression of one's pattern of self development" (p. 2). For their definition of *career development*, Lancaster and Berne have adopted the following definition developed by Herr and Cramer (1979): "Career development. . .embraces the total spectrum of sociological, psychological, educational, economic, physical, and life forces that interface to impact and shape the career of an individual; it also is a process by which one develops and refines such characteristics as self and career identity, the ability to plan with foresight, and career maturity" (p. 2). These definitions will be used in this guide for the terms "career" and "career development."

According to Lancaster and Berne (1981), career programs have evolved for reasons that are both societal- and organizational-based. One of the societal-based reasons is the change in the

way individuals view their careers. People now see careers as important in terms of overall quality of life; individuals want to derive personal satisfaction from their work, but at the same time want to balance their career interests with personal considerations such as marriage, family, and leisure activities. This change in individual career perspective has been accompanied by a decrease in job mobility. In the current economic climate it is not easy to change jobs in order to achieve career goals. Individuals, therefore, are seeking career satisfaction within their current organizations. Organizations also have become increasingly interested in career development for their employees. The factors cited most often as contributing to organizational interest in career development programs are—

- pressures of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity (EEO) legislation,
- the need for forecasting and identifying personnel needs,
- a desire to respond to strong employee interest in such programs,
- an interest in reducing attrition,
- an interest in increasing productivity,
- an aid in employee evaluation or appraisal programs. (Lancaster and Berne 1981, p. 15)

Employer-sponsored Career Development Programs discusses these factors and describes the types of programs that organizations have developed to address them. Pages 14 through 19 in that publication provide an understanding of these issues.

Suggestions for Using the Guide

The guide presents a number of tasks that you may use in planning career development programs within your organization. The tasks have been divided into two general categories according to type: (1) those that require leadership in establishing the career development program within the organization; and (2) those that are used to plan the career development program itself. Figure 1 lists the tasks according to these categories.

Leadership Tasks	Program Development Tasks
Assessing organizational readiness and commitment	Assessing program resources
Forming a team	Conducting a needs assessment
Staffing the program	Setting program goals
	Designing the program
	Implementing the program
	Evaluating the program

Figure 1. Career development program planning tasks

Although the listing of tasks in figure 1 and throughout the guide suggests an order for planning a career development program, you are not bound by the suggested order. For example, leadership tasks may be performed simultaneously with program development tasks. You may also decide that in your organization it makes sense to perform a needs assessment before approaching organizational leaders to assess their readiness to support a program. There are some tasks that logically follow others, however. Program implementation and evaluation, by their very nature, are last in the planning cycle, and setting program goals precedes designing the program. Figure 2 depicts two possible orders for implementing career development tasks.

Example 1 Tasks	Example 2 Tasks
Assessing organizational readiness and commitment	Conducting a needs assessment
Forming a team	Assessing organizational readiness and commitment
Assessing program resources	Forming a team
Conducting a needs assessment	Staffing the program
Setting program goals	Setting program goals
Designing the program	Assessing program resources
Staffing the program	Designing the program
Implementing the program	Implementing the program
Evaluating the program	Evaluating the program

Figure 2. Examples of order for implementing planning tasks

Each planning task is described in one of nine sections of the guide. Each section provides some basic information about the particular task, along with some questions that you may need to think about in completing the task. Also included are suggestions for further reading to help you seek additional information. The Appendix at the conclusion of the guide is a resource section that lists references, organizations, and periodicals from which you can obtain further information about career development.

You have knowledge and experience that you can apply to the process of planning a career development program. For example, you probably know a great deal about the organization in which you work. The purpose of the guide is twofold. First, it can assist you to organize and apply your knowledge and experience to developing the program. Second, it provides you with general guidelines and suggested resources that you may need for planning purposes.

Although the guide will not lead you through every step of the planning process, it will provide you with some basic concepts that you will need. Whenever possible, illustrations and worksheets also are provided for your use. Your knowledge and experience will determine how much additional background information you may want to seek.

In using the guide, keep in mind your organization. Some of the information given and ideas suggested may not apply in your setting. Also, you already may have completed some of the tasks outlined in the guide. The guide is intended as a tool to enhance your planning, so use it in whatever way best fits your needs and those of your organization.

PART I

LEADERSHIP TASKS

Leadership Task 1 **Assessing Organizational Readiness and Commitment**
Leadership Task 2 **Forming a Team**
Leadership Task 3 **Staffing the Program**

LEADERSHIP TASK 1

Assessing Organizational Readiness and Commitment

The first leadership task is to determine the readiness of your organization for a career development program. Since your program will cause change, your need is to consider how change occurs in your organization. What programs have worked? What programs have failed? What have been key factors in the success or failure of other programs? Although each organization reacts to change differently, there are basic steps involved in preparing for change. This task is designed to help you lay the groundwork for acceptance of the career development program.

A successful career development program must have the support and commitment of the organization. Key people in the organization need to understand the program's benefits for the organization and its employees. If top management in the organization has requested that you develop a program, you already may have the necessary commitment. Still, it is important that all management levels understand what you are planning. If you are initiating the program, you will need to spend some time developing a strategy to gain organizational support for the program.

Titles and responsibilities may vary, but there are personnel in every organization with assigned responsibility for human resource development policies and programs. If you are not linked with these people already, identify them and analyze how they make decisions and can potentially be involved in your planning and implementation efforts. In addition, identify others who influence human resource decisions.

Although these "key people" will vary from one setting to the next, they typically will want information on planned change efforts of this nature, so be prepared to provide it. The information may include the following:

- What is career development?
- Why do we need it?
- How will the program be implemented?
- What resources will it require?
- How will it benefit the organization and its employees?
- How are other organizations providing similar services?
- How effective are career development programs?

Your understanding of the key people and the decision-making process will help you decide what information you will need to gather. The information can be gathered by several methods:

- Consult references listed in the resource section (See the Appendix at the end of this guide).

- Talk to individuals responsible for career planning programs in other organizations.

- Seek information from professional associations such as the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA), American Management Associations (AMA), and the Career Planning and Adult Development Network.

- Read professional journals, such as *Training and Development Journal*, *Training/HRD*, and *Personnel*.

Once you have gathered information, you may need to organize it for presentation to management. Again, your knowledge of your organization will help you. You may decide that you want to begin by approaching some individuals on an informal basis. Using a draft program proposal, you can gain support and solicit recommendations. On the other hand, you may need to develop a formal proposal. It will vary from one setting to another.

If you develop a formal proposal, it will be helpful to consider characteristics that influence organizational change efforts. These include—

- organizational norms (e.g., management and hourly personnel do not mingle in your organization);

- organizational barriers (e.g., your organization's resistance to outsiders creates barriers to using consultants);

- key people within the organization (e.g., human resource personnel, personnel managers, and representatives of employee groups);

- individual variation (e.g., people in the organization will need varying degrees of orientation to career development activities).

Your information will be more acceptable if—

- proposed results are acceptable in terms of group norms;

- organizational barriers to the program are identified and a special effort is made to make the new program less threatening to the organization;

- specific strategies that take into consideration subgroup norms are developed for each group;

- key people are utilized in the implementation process;

- individual differences that may arise in adopting the program are clarified and resolved using a variety of strategies. (Miller 1976, pp. 26-29)

During and following a formal proposal presentation, you will want to get an indication of the organization's willingness to support the program. If support is not given, you will need to seek suggestions for additional steps that can be taken to gain support.

Questions to Answer as You Assess Organizational Readiness and Commitment

1. How do changes take place in your organization?
2. Who are the key people in your organization?
3. How are decisions made about human resource development activities?
4. What information will key personnel want about career development activities?
5. How can you collect that information?
6. In terms of your organization, what is the most effective manner to organize the information?
7. How will you secure organizational commitment to the career development program?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Miller, J. V. *Using Change Agent Skills to Manage Career Guidance Program Implementation*. Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research, National Consortium on Competency-Based Staff Development, 1976.

Otte, F. F. "Creating Successful Career Development Programs." *Training and Development Journal* 36 (February 1982): 30-37. (ERIC No. EJ 257 404).

Souerwine, A. H. "Career Planning: Getting Started with Top Management Support." In *Career Development in the 1980s: Theory and Practice*, edited by D. H. Montross and C. J. Shinkman. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1981.

LEADERSHIP TASK 2

Forming a Team

Once you have gained organizational support and commitment, you can begin the process of planning for a career development program. Although you may have been given total responsibility for designing and implementing the program, a carefully selected team can help you. Team members can support program development by working together to plan systematic change. Some advantages to working with a team include the following:

- A team provides representation from the organization.
- A team permits sharing of work.
- Team members can provide motivation and emotional support for one another.
- Team members provide diverse skills and knowledge. (Miller 1978, p. 36)

Forming a team is a leadership task that can assist in carrying out many of the other tasks discussed in this guide. The individuals on the team can influence the success of the planning effort, so they need to be selected with care. The role of team leader is crucial.

Every organization is made up of individuals whose support is necessary if change is to occur. Some of these people have been identified in Leadership Task 1, Assessing Organizational Readiness and Commitment, but others exist in various subgroups of the organization. A first step in selecting planning team members is to identify the important subgroups and the key individuals who have influence within each subgroup. You will find that influential individuals hold both formal and informal leadership positions within the organization.

Although you will want to have individuals on your team who support human resource development, you should also try to identify individuals who might resist the program. Through participation on the planning team, "resisters" tend to become more supportive. Specifically, you should include affirmative action and equal opportunity staff on your side, as they will be able to indicate how your efforts fit in with activities they have underway. Other subgroups to consider in thinking about planning team membership and support for your program include personnel staff responsible for job posting, employee relations representatives, people in charge of management development, union representatives, and employer representatives or groups.

When making the final selection of team members, consider—

- time that they are willing to commit to planning activities,
- compatibility and willingness to work in groups,
- group membership skills (Miller 1978, pp. 41-43),

- favorable attitudes toward human resource development,
- opinion leaders within the line organization.

Some thought needs to be given to the role of the team. Will the team be an ad hoc committee, a task force, or a regular committee? In addition, team members will need and want to know the purpose of the group, the nature of its tasks, and the expected time commitment.

Leadership is needed for effective team functioning. Working with the team members, you will direct the change that is going to take place in order for career development activities to be planned and implemented. As the team or program leader, you can facilitate the change process if you—

- capitalize on strengths of individual team members;
- remain flexible and allow team members to make decisions;
- maintain linkages to organizational leadership and important subgroups;
- provide resources necessary for program development. (Miller 1978, pp. 53-55)

Questions to Answer as You Form a Team

1. What groups within your organization will be involved in implementing the career development program?
2. Which individuals will make good team members?
3. What will be expected of team members?
4. What leadership strategies will you use in working with the team?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Miller, J. V. *Using Change Agent Skills to Manage Career Guidance Program Development.* Module 28. Revised. Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research, National Consortium on Competency-Based Staff Development, 1978. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 181 385).

Otte, F. L. "Creating Successful Career Development Programs." *Training and Development Journal* 36 (February 1982): 30-37. (ERIC No. EJ 257 404).

LEADERSHIP TASK 3

Staffing the Program

The program needs to be staffed by qualified individuals. The program may be staffed early in the development process so that the staff can participate in program planning, or it may be staffed once the scope of the program is determined. Although you probably will work with your personnel department on this task, you will need to specify what kind of individuals you are seeking.

The number and type of staff needed will be determined by the scope of your program. What skills will program staff need to implement the program? Some important considerations in determining the number and type of staff are—

- budget available for staffing the program;
- number and type of program activities to be conducted;
- cultural norms of organization regarding types of staff (i.e., don't hire consultants if they are not accepted in your organization).

Once you have determined the number and type of staff your program will require, you may need to develop job descriptions and job postings for each position if your organization uses these procedures. If you develop written descriptions of the positions, include the goals of the program and competencies required of staff members. When you develop a job description, you are saying, "We are looking for an individual who can do the following things." Although you and your planning group should establish the tasks to be accomplished and the skills needed to carry them out, you may wish to consult your personnel department for assistance in writing the job descriptions and position postings.

You already may have individuals with the necessary skills and abilities to staff the career development program within the organization. Some advantages to using people already employed by the organization include the following:

- They know and understand the organization.
- They might be able to assume responsibilities for career development activities as part of their other assignments, thus saving money.
- They would be "known performers"; that is, their work would be familiar and their ability to handle new or additional responsibilities could be judged.
- A new program might gain quicker acceptance if it is staffed with familiar individuals, particularly those readily accepted by others in the organization or held in relatively high esteem.

If you are going to staff the program internally, a good strategy would be to involve selected staff members early as members of the planning team or as participants in a pilot program. Internal staff members can help "sell" the program throughout the organization, once they understand it. If you are going to consider internal candidates for staffing the career development program, you will need to work with the personnel department on job-posting and hiring procedures. Even though some organizations may not have formal job-posting programs or systems, they have some mechanism for filling positions. You should determine the structure and content of the interviews for prospective staff. Since you have been involved in planning the program, you will know the kinds of questions that should be asked in the interviews. You will also know what type of individual you are looking for in terms of personality, skills, and abilities.

You may decide the program will have a better chance for success if it is staffed by individuals new to the organization. Reasons for hiring external personnel for career development staff include the following:

- No one in your organization possesses the expertise necessary to implement the program.
- In your organization, a new program is more likely to succeed if staffed by personnel new to the organization.
- Conditions in your organization are such that only new personnel will be acceptable to all those involved in planning the program.

You are the one who can make the decision regarding internal or external staff based on your knowledge of the organization, its employees, and its acceptance of change.

Questions to Answer as You Staff the Program

1. How many staff people will the program require and which skills should staff have?
2. How will job descriptions and position postings be developed?
3. Would it be possible to staff the program internally?
4. What would be the advantages of using individuals new to the organization to staff the program?
5. How will job posting, interviewing, and selection be conducted?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Badertscher, J. *The Employment Interview: An Essential Selection Tool*. OSSC Bulletin Vol. 23, No. 5. Eugene, OR: Oregon School Study Council, 1980. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 180 113).

Hall, J. "Staffing." In *Developing, Administering, and Evaluating Adult Education*, by A. Knox and Associates. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1980.

PART II

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Program Development Task 1 Assessing Program Resources
Program Development Task 2 Conducting a Needs Assessment
Program Development Task 3 Setting Program Goals
Program Development Task 4 Designing the Program
Program Development Task 5 Implementing the Program
Program Development Task 6 Evaluating the Program

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TASK 1

Assessing Program Resources

Assessing resources for your program is an essential task. Key decision makers will want to know what existing resources are available for the career development program before committing further resources. Assessing resources is presented as the first program development task, since it is related to and can be completed in conjunction with Leadership Task 1, Assessing Organizational Readiness and Commitment.

Available resources will define what you will be able to accomplish in your program. In thinking about resources, consider those that are available within your organization and those that are available outside. Figure 3 lists examples of internal and external resources.

Internal Resources	External Resources
• People	• Career development programs in other organizations
• Materials	• Local schools, colleges, and universities
• Equipment	• Print or media materials
• Facilities	• Professional associations

Figure 3. Examples of internal and external resources for career development

Your organization probably has a number of resources that can be used in carrying out the career development program, such as people, materials, equipment, and facilities. In order to identify potential internal resources, including employees with good career counseling skills, you may need to look beneath the surface of the organization. For instance, in many organizations there are technical or scientific employees who also have counseling credentials and skills that they are using in volunteer work with community agencies. These individuals can help forge a link between the line organization and the human resource function, and their services can often be obtained at no cost to the program. Other examples of internal resources include audiovisual materials and equipment, meeting places, and conference rooms. Careful attention to uncovering internal resources for career development may help you discover more than you expected (Lowry et al. 1977).

A number of external resources may be available in your local community. Your local school district, college, or university will have individuals on its staff who are knowledgeable about career development theory and practice. Members of local chapters of professional associations, such as the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), will have experience in organizational career development. Even if you do not have resources available to you locally, you can establish contacts through national headquarters of professional associations such as ASTD, the Career Planning and Adult Development Network, and the Organization Development Institute. (See the Appendix for addresses.) You can also utilize many of the available print and media materials on career development.

Develop a resource file following the format suggested on Worksheet 1. Describe resources and how they might be used. In the case of an individual, note the person's skills and background experiences. For nonhuman resources, such as equipment or facilities, make notes about any cost, contact person, availability, size, and quality (Franklin, Snyder, and Wright 1981).

Questions to Answer in Assessing Resources

1. What internal resources are available?
2. What external resources are available locally?
3. What other external resources are available?
4. How can you develop a resource file?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Boyle, P.G. *Planning Better Programs*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1981.

Franklin, J.; Snyder, R.; and Wright, J., *Making Your Way through Murky Waters: A Manual for Public Participation Coordinators in Natural Resources Planning*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University, 1981.

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Worksheet 1

RESOURCE FILE

For individuals*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Work Telephone: _____ Home Telephone: _____

Organization/Group: _____

Notes: (characteristics, skills, experience, dates and outcomes of contacts, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

For nonhuman resources*

Resource: _____

Use: _____

Contact Person for Use: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Organization/Group: _____

Notes: (characteristics such as size, cost, availability, quality, dates and outcomes of contacts, use, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*You may wish to build a file on 5 x 8 inch cards.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TASK 2

Conducting a Needs Assessment

Career development programs in the work place are designed to address the needs of both the organization and its employees. The second program development task is to describe these needs through a systematic assessment. Results of the assessment may reveal conflicts between the needs of individuals and the needs of the organization. One function the needs assessment can serve is to help coordinate and balance the needs of the two groups. It is important that employees' needs be given equal consideration with those of the organization.

Organizational needs for career development programs may include—

- predicting human resource requirements,
- reducing staff turnover,
- complying with affirmative action and equal employment opportunity legislation,
- increasing productivity.

Employee needs for career development may include—

- identifying career paths available within the organization,
- developing or enhancing skills and abilities leading to new positions,
- balancing various life roles, including work, family and leisure.

There are six basic steps involved in conducting a needs assessment:

1. Determine what information to collect.
2. Determine the method or methods to be used in collecting the information.
3. Select or develop the instruments.
4. Decide who will respond to the needs assessment.
5. Collect information about needs.
6. Tabulate and analyze the results.

To determine what information to collect, decide what it is you want your needs assessment to accomplish. You already know that information on both the needs of individuals and the needs

of the organization is required. What specifically do you want to know about these needs? Although, ideally, you will want to learn as much as possible, you will need to consider the resources necessary to conduct the assessment, including available data, time, and financial resources.

There are several methods you can use in collecting needs assessment information. The most common are personal interviews and written or telephone surveys (questionnaires). Each of these methods has its strengths and weaknesses. Personal interviews, for example, usually result in extensive information, but the method is time consuming and costly. Written questionnaires are generally a less expensive means of gathering data, but people may fail to respond to them, and they also limit the kind of information that can be gathered.

Once you have determined the method you will use in conducting the needs assessment, select or develop your information collection procedures. What questions will be asked? Who will collect the information? When will it be collected? If you or your team do not possess the expertise to design or select these information collection procedures, call upon someone who does. Possible sources of assistance with this step include other personnel within your organization or outside consultants.

Selecting a sample of individuals who will participate in the needs assessment is the third step. Select participants who are representative of both management and employees in order to obtain information about both organizational needs and individual (employee) needs. In addition, employees from all levels of the organization need to be represented in the assessment. Before employees can give you information about their career development needs, they must understand what career development is and how it applies to them. You may, therefore, want to spend time informing employees about career development before you ask them to complete the instrument. It also is important to explain how you intend to use the information.

Collecting information involves administering the questionnaires, conducting the interviews, or gathering data from sources such as records and reports. You will need to make arrangements to circulate questionnaires or conduct interviews at convenient times for participants.

The final step in the needs assessment is to tabulate and analyze the results. Tabulate and compile data from the instruments and organize the information into a format that can provide the basis for planning career development activities. You want to show how each need was rated, how different groups responded, and what individual-organizational differences emerged. If you have data processing equipment, you may be able to use it in this step.

Questions to Answer as You Plan Your Needs Assessment

1. What information will need to be collected in order to assess needs?
2. How will information about needs be collected?
3. What information collection procedures will be used?
4. From whom will you collect information?
5. How can employees become informed about career development and its applications?
6. How will data collection be monitored?

7. How will data be tabulated and analyzed?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Leibowitz, A., and Schlossberg, N. "Designing Career Development Programs in Organizations: A Systems Approach." In *Career Development in the 1980s: Theory and Practice*, edited by D. H. Montross and C. J. Shinkman. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1981.

Pfister, L. A. *Client and Environment Needs: Determining Current Status and Desired Outcomes of the Career Guidance Program. Legislative Provisions for the Improvement of Guidance Programs and Personal Development*. Columbus, OH: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1979.

Witkin, B. R. *An Analysis of Needs Assessment Techniques for Educational Planning at State, Intermediate, and District Levels*. Hayward, CA: Office of the Alameda County Superintendent of Schools, 1975. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 108 370).

Wold, J. F., and Bacher, R. N. "Career Negotiation: Trading Off Employee and Organizational Needs." *Personnel* 58 (March-April 1981): 53-59.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TASK 3

Setting Program Goals

Effective career development programs are based on clearly defined program goals that state the overall purposes and expected outcomes of the program. In setting goals for your program, you will use the information gathered in the needs assessment to help you set goals in relation to both organizational and employee needs. You also will use information about available resources to evaluate the cost of achieving stated goals.

Goals are important because—

- they designate what should be pursued or attained in the program,
- they set priorities based on importance (Grotelueschen 1980),
- they provide a basis for collecting evaluative information about your program.

The goals of the career development program need to be compatible with the goals of your organization so that the program will support both individual employee and corporate needs. Program goals may focus on a number of different organizational needs, including productivity, creativity, efficiency, morale, and public image. Some examples of career development program goals are—

- to provide each employee with necessary skills to perform his or her job more effectively,
- to provide each employee with the opportunity for career development and advancement to a more challenging and better paying position,
- to provide each manager with assurance that all employees in his or her department will have both knowledge of and practice in skills needed to be successful in other job functions in the department,
- to provide top management with objective assessment data on employees through definitive measurement and tracking devices. (Kelly 1982)

To set goals, you need information about both the current situation and "what ought to be" (the ideal situation). Your needs assessment will have generated the information you need to set program goals. You now need to convert this needs information into program goals. It is quite possible that there will be needs that are in direct conflict with one another. It is not unusual for employees to think about career development in terms of their individual careers rather than in terms of organizational growth and development. Organizations, on the other hand, frequently are concerned with organizational needs and may not consider the needs of individuals within the organization. In establishing program goals, any conflicts must be examined so that the goals that are set will reflect both employee and organizational needs and concerns.

Once a realistic set of needs statements has been identified, goals can be written. The following are some basic elements to be used in developing well written program goals. Goals should be—

- written in clear and direct language,
- written without specification of program processes,
- written to suggest the expected outcomes,
- consistent with the philosophical base of the parent organization. (Hooper and Williams 1979, p. 23)

Once goals are written, they should be ranked in their order of importance. The ranking can be accomplished through a three-step process:

1. Determine what is most important for your program to accomplish, using information gained through the assessment needs.
2. Determine what your program can best deliver, given available resources. Be sure to consider staffing, materials, time, and so forth.
3. Put the two priority lists together (i.e., determine priority based on importance of goals and on what you can deliver). Ideally, your goals will reflect what is important as well as what can be delivered effectively. (Hooper and Williams 1979, p. 25)

Worksheet 2, which follows this section, can be used as you develop program goals.

Questions to Answer in Setting Program Goals

1. What are the goals of your organization?
2. What are the needs of the organization? of employees?
3. How will possible conflicts in needs be resolved?
4. What should be considered in ranking program goals?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Benson, P., and Thornton, G., III. "A Model Career Planning Program." *Personnel* 55 (March-April 1978): 30-39.

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Hooper, P., and Williams, F. *Guidance Program Planning: Building a Model through Goals and Objectives. Legislative Provisions for the Improvement of Guidance Programs and Personnel Development.* Columbus, OH: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1979.

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Worksheet 2

PROGRAM GOAL DEVELOPMENT

Needs Statements	Program Goals Reflecting Needs Statements	Priority Order of Goal Statements

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TASK 4

Designing the Program—Models and Strategies

During this stage of the planning process, you will be selecting a range of models and strategies to be used to carry out your career development program. The program design can be thought of as a blueprint since it will be the concrete plan linking goals to the end result (Grotelueschen 1980). In order to decide on a program design, you will need information about career development models and strategies used in other organizations. You can select the ones you wish to use on the basis of your program goals and available resources. You may find that you will want to adapt some of the existing models to suit your purposes, or you may decide that you want to create some of your own.

First, discover all the strategies and models that could be used in your program. There are several ways to do this. You can—

- examine what others are doing;
- use your own knowledge and experience;
- examine available materials and resources;
- brainstorm. (Moore and Kimmel 1979)

In *Employer-sponsored Career Development Programs*, Lancaster and Berne (1981) developed a summary of the scope of programs and practices in the field by grouping activities under these six general categories:

- Individual Career Planning and Counseling
- Assessment
- Career Information Service
- Organizational Career Planning
- Training and Development
- Special Populations Programs and Practices (p. 22)

Figure 4, "Employer-assisted career development programs and practices," is reproduced here to help you begin listing possible activities for your program. In developing your list, it is important to consider all possibilities. Do not eliminate strategies on the basis of conventional limitations or imagined constraints (Moore and Kimmel 1979). The goal is to develop many options.

Individual Career Planning and Counseling

Career Counseling by Personnel Staff
Informal: Career and Educational Information and Advising
Formal: Matching People with Jobs
Career Counseling by Managers/Supervisors
Informal: Day-to-Day; Mentors
Formal: Career Development Reviews/Appraisal; Performance Reviews
Career Counseling by Peers
Career Counseling by Specialized Staff Counselor
Referral to External Career Counselor
Downward, Transfer, or "Dual Ladder" Counseling
Outplacement Counseling (Outreach Placement)
Individual Career Planning by Self

Assessment

Battery Testing for Aptitude, Intelligence, Personality, Situational Factors
Individual Career and Self Analysis
Performance Appraisal Processes
Interest Inventory Testing

Career Information Services

Job Posting
Communication of EEO and Affirmative Action Programs and Policies
Communication on Career Paths or Ladders
Communication of Educational Assistance; Continuing Education Options
Communication on Training and Development Options
Career Information (Resource) Center Programs

Organizational Career Planning

Personnel Succession Planning
Fast-Track Management Planning
Personnel Profile Planning
Internal Recruitment and Development Planning

Training and Development

Training of Supervisors/Managers in Career Counseling
Life and Career Planning Workshops
Job Performance and Development
Technical Skills Training
Sponsorship of Outside Training Options for Employees
Managers' On-the-Job Training of Subordinates

Special Populations Programs and Practices

Minorities
Women: Subprofessional/Reentry/Managerial
Preretirees
Midcareer Trainees
Management Trainees
Outplacement of Terminated Emp'oyees
Subprofessionals
Disadvantaged
Handicapped
Dual Career Families

Figure 4. Employer-assisted career development programs and practices

SOURCE: Lancaster and Berne 1981, p. 22.

Once you have listed the range of activities, examine each in terms of your program goals and available resources, applying the following criteria:

- *Complexity.* How many changes will it require?
- *Convenience.* Can it be developed and implemented through resources within the organization or will it require outside assistance?
- *Flexibility.* How rigidly must the method be followed to be successful? Can it be adapted to your needs?
- *Cost.* What are the initial costs and future funding needs? (Campbell et al. 1973)
- *Compatibility.* Is it compatible with the organizational structure? Is it acceptable in terms of organizational norms?

Examine your list of possible activities using these criteria to select specific activities for use in your program. A worksheet is included at the end of this section to assist you with this task.

Questions to Answer in Designing Your Program

1. What is the range of possible activities or practices that could be used in your program?
2. Which activities are most appropriate for your program?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Campbell, R. E.; Walz, G. R.; Miller, J. V.; and Kriger, S. F. *Career Guidance: A Handbook of Methods*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1973.

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Worksheet 3

CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Possible Activities	Goal Achieved	Complexity	Convenience	Flexibility	Cost	Compatibility
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						
16.						
17.						
18.						

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TASK 5

Implementing the Program

Implementation is the process of carrying out the program. Implementation involves developing a plan to achieve the goals established in Program Development Task 3, Setting Program Goals, by using the models and strategies selected in Program Development Task 4, Designing the Program. For each goal selected, you can establish a timetable that includes the following information:

- Model or strategies to be used to carry out the goal
- Tasks involved in developing each strategy or model
- Individuals(s) responsible for accomplishing the tasks
- Resources required
- Date for beginning task(s)
- Date for completing task(s)

Figure 5 gives an example of a timetable for the implementation process. A detailed set of timetables based on the format shown in figure 5, together with information you record on Worksheet 4, will give you a planning device as well as show you how each goal fits into the total program.

Questions to Answer in Program Implementation

1. Who will be responsible for program implementation?
2. How will implementation schedules be developed?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Franklin, J.; Snyder, R.; and Wright, J. *Making Your Way through Murky Waters: A Manual for Public Participation Coordinators in Natural Resources Planning*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University, 1981.

Program Goal: To provide employees with career information, including job posting, career paths or ladders in the organization, and training and development opportunities within and outside the organization.

Strategies or models to be used in carrying out goal: **Career Information Center**

Tasks	Resources	Individual(s) Responsible	Starting Date	Completion Date
Locating appropriate space for Center	None required	Jim S. and Mary W.	6/1	6/15
Developing procedures for selection of materials and information to be distributed by Center	Examples from other Career Information Centers	Career Development Program Planning Team	6/1	8/1
Selecting materials	Catalogs, bibliographies, resource lists, $2,000 budget	Career Program Director and Mary W.	8/15	Ongoing
Establishing administrative procedures for Center, such as staffing, hours of operation, and so forth	$15,000 budget for part-time staffing of Center	Career Development Program Planning Team and Career Program Director	8/15	9/15
Acquiring materials	Expenditure of $2,000 budget	Career Center Staff and Mary W.	9/15	Ongoing
Preparing for Center opening	$5,000 budget for supplies, shelves, and so forth	Center Staff and Career Program Director	10/1	10/31
Opening Center	None required	All of above	11/1	

Figure 5. Example of a program implementation timetable

Worksheet 4

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program Goal: _____

_____

Strategies or models to be used in carrying out goal: _____

Tasks	Resources	Individual(s) Responsible	Starting Date	Completion Date

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TASK 6

Evaluating the Program

Program evaluation is the process of judging the worth or value of a program (Steele 1970). If your career development program is to have continuing support from the organization, its effectiveness must be proven. You can provide evidence of success by collecting information about the results of the program (Leibowitz and Schlossberg 1981). In addition to proving the program's worth or effectiveness, information gathered for evaluation also can be used to revise and improve the program (Grotelueschen 1980). You may find that an activity did not work as you expected and that you want to modify it. During the planning process you have developed goals, a program design, and an implementation plan. These can provide guidelines for collecting evaluation information.

When designing your evaluation, you need to consider who will use the evaluation results. You probably will have two main audiences for program evaluation:

- organizational decision makers, who can support continuation of the program
- staff of the career development program, who are responsible for the ongoing operation of the program

There may be other groups in your organization who will be interested in evaluative information, including potential clients of the program.

What kind of information will people want? Initially, organizational decision makers and career development program staff may be interested in the same type of information, such as the following:

- How well the program is meeting its goals
- Participant reactions to individual activities
- Supervisor reception of and support for program
- Number of persons participating
- Cost of program

Eventually, organizational decision makers will want to collect data on behavioral and organizational change resulting from the program. These individuals may be interested in the long-term results of the program, such as its effects on employee productivity and morale or on the organization's attrition rate (Leibowitz and Schlossberg 1981).

Although program staff will be interested in the long-term results of the program, they also will want evaluation information that can be used in making decisions about the program. They

will be interested in having information that can overcome any shortcomings in the program (Grotelueschen 1980). They will want to know, for example, why employees do not use the career resource center, or why some activities failed to meet their objectives.

In order to meet the evaluation needs described above, at least three types of information are needed:

- Information about the program implementation—How well did it do what it was intended to do?
- Information about long term impact—What organizational changes actually occurred as a result of the program?
- Information for use in making decisions about the program—How can the program be more effective in serving its clientele?

The following is a sample of information others have examined in past evaluation studies.

Actions. Have the participants changed their behavior in regard to career development activities (e.g., gathering information, sending resumes, talking to counselors, applying for jobs, identifying transferable skills, etc.)?

Job Quality. Have the participants been able to change their work circumstances significantly (e.g., growth potential, motivation, encouragement, humane conditions, etc.)?

Productivity. Have the participants improved their productivity (e.g., more organized, adaptable, able to keep up with new developments, accept new assignments, etc.)?

Interaction with Supervisors. Have supervisors' relationships with participants included behaviors that further employees' career development (e.g., coach, counselor, mentor, advocate, broker, etc.)? (Stump 1982, p. 2)

After you have identified your program evaluation needs, you need to decide how you are going to collect the information. Your evaluation plan should specify desired or required information, persons responsible for information collection, and the method of obtaining the information. Worksheet 5 will help you organize this stage of the evaluation process.

After the information has been gathered, it should be prepared for presentation to the various audiences. Although staff of the career development program may not require formal reports, information for organizational decision makers should be presented in a more formal manner.

Questions to Answer in Evaluating Your Program

1. Who needs evaluation information?
2. What kind of information do these audiences need?
3. How will this information be collected?
4. How will the information be reported?

Suggestions for Further Reading

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Grotelueschen, A. D. "Program Evaluation." In *Developing, Administering, and Evaluating Adult Education*, by A. B. Knox and Associates. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1980.

Leibowitz, Z., and Schlossberg, N. "Designing Career Development Programs in Organizations: A Systems Approach." In *Career Development in the 1980s: Theory and Practice*, edited by D. H. Montross and C. J. Shinkman. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1981.

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Stump, R. "Evaluating Your Career Development Program." *Career Planning and Adult Development Newsletter* 4 (June 1982): 1-2.

Worksheet 5

COLLECTING INFORMATION FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION

Information Required	Who Will Collect It?	How Will It Be Collected?

APPENDIX

RESOURCES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

PRINT MATERIAL

Theoretical Information on Career and Adult Development

Campbell, R., and Shaltry, P., comps. *Perspectives on Adult Career Development and Guidance*. Research and Development Series No. 181. Columbus, OH: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1978. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 189 290).

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Kaye, B. L. "How You Can Help Employees Formulate Their Career Goals." *Personnel Journal* 59 (May 1980): 368-372, 402. (ERIC No. EJ 224 814).

Kaye, B. L. "Career Development: The Integrating Force." *Training and Development Journal* 35 (May 1981): 36-40. (ERIC No. 245 233).

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Professional Associations and Organizations

American Management Associations (AMA)
135 West 50th Street
New York, NY 10020
Phone: 212/586-8100

American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)
Suite 305
600 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20024
Phone: 202/484-2390

Career Planning and Adult Development Network
1190 South Bascom Avenue
Suite 211
San Jose, CA 95128
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Organization Development Institute
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Periodical Publications

Career Planning and Adult Development Newsletter
Career Planning and Adult Development Network
1190 South Bascom Avenue
Suite 211
San Jose, CA 94128

Personnel
American Management Associations Subscription Services
Box 319
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

Personnel Journal
A. C. Croft, Inc.
866 West 18th Street
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Training and Development Journal
American Society for Training and Development
Suite 305
600 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20024

Training/HRD
731 Hennepin Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Vocational Guidance Quarterly
National Vocational Guidance Association
Two Skyline Place, Suite 400
5203 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22041

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